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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF STAFF
WASHINGTON 25, D.C.

OFF SECY OF DEFENSE

OCT 31 1961

MEMORANDUM FOR: THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

SUBJECT: Essential National Strategic Task (U)

DECLASSIFIED UNDER AUTHORITY OF THE
INTERAGENCY SECURITY CLASSIFICATION APPEALS PANEL
E.O. 13526, SECTION 5.3(b)(3)
ISCAP No. 2000-011, Document 1 Date OCT 24 2013

1. References:

a. Memorandum from Brigadier General Brown, dated 23 October 1961, concerning Single Integrated Operational Plan guidance and long range delivery systems.

b. Appendix I to the Memorandum for the President from the Secretary of Defense, subject: Recommended Long Range Nuclear Delivery Forces, 1963-1967 (f), dated 23 September 1961.

2. At your meeting with the Joint Chiefs of Staff on 23 October 1961, we discussed the desirability of having a clearly defined "Essential National Strategic Task" or basic strategic nuclear objectives for general war. At that time you indicated that a statement of basic objectives might better be expressed elsewhere than in the SIOP guidance since the SIOP will be a capabilities plan. Subsequent to our meeting General Brown, of your office, transmitted to me your desire that I review and comment on this matter (Reference 1a). My views and comments, hereby submitted, are in the context of our discussion regarding strategic objectives and requirements, and therefore pertain to Section II of the referenced Appendix.

3. I concur with the philosophy and rationale presented in Section II of reference 1b with only a few reservations as stated in Inclosure 1 hereto.

4. In conformance to your views regarding the Single Integrated Operational Plan guidance, I have withdrawn my formal objections (within the Joint Chiefs of Staff) to the lack of an Essential National Strategic Task as an integral part of guidance for the Single Integrated Operational Plan, while continuing to hold the view that such a strategic objective still has a definite bearing on such a capabilities plan, as well as serving other purposes. This impact on the capabilities plan, can, I agree, be imposed by means of a document external to the Single Integrated Operational Plan guidance. I am of the opinion that, in order to serve at

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Attachment 3

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SUBJECT: Essential National Strategic Task (U)

least the following three purposes which I feel are necessary, there should be published a document defining the Essential National Strategic Task:

a. During periods when the execution of contingency plans is a distinct possibility (as may be also the diversion of some Single Integrated Operational Plans committed forces for support of these contingency plans), an Essential National Strategic Task would provide definition of forces and other resources which, at all events, must not be diverted and which must be retained intact for use if general war subsequently develops. Without such an Essential National Strategic Task, should the necessity for diversions of nuclear-capable delivery forces be deemed desirable, e.g., for limited war, no definite preplanned level of inviolable strategic-capable forces would have been established.

b. Difficulties have arisen annually in past years, because the Joint Chiefs of Staff have never had national strategic objectives in a form readily translatable into force level objectives. These difficulties have necessarily, then, been resolved on an arbitrary basis. Without an Essential National Strategic Task, this situation will project into the future indefinitely.

c. Determination of nuclear stockpile requirements similarly hinges on basic targeting requirements, and has similarly been resolved in past years on an arbitrary basis.

5. In order to further clarify my views, there is attached as Inclosure 2 hereto, an example of an Essential National Strategic Task to which I could subscribe.



2 Incl

1. Comments, Appendix I
to Memo for the
President (TS)
2. Army Proposed ENST (TS)

G. H. DECKER,
General, United States Army
Chief of Staff

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COMMENTS OF THE CHIEF OF STAFF, U.S. ARMY ON APPENDIX I
TO MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

1. Page 5. Target Destruction Requirements

a. In my view the number of Urban-Industrial Aim Points is unduly high. In most cases a single aim point (DGZ) will suffice for each urban-industrial complex. The Hickey Study (DoD Project 12 - Composite Target System) includes [108] urban complexes possessing a major or critical industrial capacity. It further states that while the Soviet industrial base is projected to grow at an annual rate of 6%, the growth would take place in currently existing urban areas and that no increase in the number of urban-industrial targets should result from economic growth. A Navy study, considered by the Joint Chiefs of Staff, finds that effective strike of the [75] largest Soviet cities would "place at risk" 70% of all Soviet industry and 80% of government control centers; strike of the [156] cities of population 100,000 or greater would only place at risk an additional 10% of industrial capacity and an additional 15% of government control centers. I would advocate as an urban-industrial targeting objective [approximately 100] cities in USSR and China, selected according to industrial importance. Further, economy of delivery vehicles (as numbers of strategic targets increase in future years) being of progressively more importance, I believe that the industrial floor space should be the targeting objective rather than individual military installations within the cities. These military installations would be damaged due to co-location with the urban center without requiring individual targeting.

b. With regard to the [50] Supporting Airfields, I feel that some further definition of the term would be required to justify it as an essential targeting objective. Although, you have designated a round figure of [50] supporting airfields, were the term designated as a targeting category, at least [330] so-called dispersal bases could be interpreted to fall in that category, the vast majority of which do not warrant inclusion in the Essential National Strategic Task.

c. To include hard missile sites as targets for U.S. strategic missiles involves an unwarranted expenditure of missiles to obtain an acceptable level of assurance against even a single enemy missile site. As you are aware, the Hickey Study concludes that such is uneconomical until U.S. delivery systems achieve a CEP of less than one-half nautical mile with yields of [] megatons. Even then the expenditure will be unduly high, as illustrated by the following tabulations, using operational factors from the referenced appendix and other parameters as follows:

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Inclosure 1 to Memo to Sec Def

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CXP (n.m.)

Damage probability for
weapons detonated at
target.

Survival probability.

Penetration probability.

Reliability factor.

TABLE I*

TITAN		
.5	.7	1.0
.85	.69	.45
.7	.7	.7
1.0	1.0	1.0
.65	.65	.65

MINUTEMAN		
.5	.7	1.0
.32	.18	.10
.75	.75	.75
1.0	1.0	1.0
.65	.65	.65

Expectation of Damage
against a single missile site:

1 weapon	.39	.31	.20	.16 (Not computed)
2 weapons	.62	.53	.37	.29 "
3 weapons	.77	.68	.50	.43 "
4 weapons	.86	.78	.60	.51 "

* Hardness of enemy sites -

Some solution to the hardened ICBM problem, other than a missile duel, must be found.

2. With regard to the assumed Soviet ICBM strengths, the United States Intelligence Board, at the request of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, is currently preparing, as a matter of priority, an estimate of the number of Soviet ICBM sites through 1967, with particular emphasis on hardened sites.

3. While the survivability factors for hardened U.S. missiles as indicated in Table 1, page 18 of reference 1b seem rather low in view of the fact that the Soviets have the problem of missile trade-off as well as we, I would prefer to withhold comment on these factors until completion of a study now in progress within my staff. This study aims at analysis of the implications of probable Soviet anti-ICBM System alternatives on US strategic targeting policies, plans, and methods of target attack.

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Urgent

ARMY-PROPOSED ESSENTIAL NATIONAL STRATEGIC TASK

The Essential National Strategic Task is that Strategic Target System in the Sino-Soviet Bloc (with associated specific weights of nuclear attack to be programmed upon the target system), the capability of attack of which must be retained at all costs and under all contingencies, pending the outbreak of general war. Forces and other resources earmarked for accomplishment of the Essential National Strategic Task will, under no circumstances, be diverted for support of contingency plans or for support of limited war operations, but will be held inviolate until required for general war operations. The Essential National Strategic Task will consist of the following target systems (weights of attack are outlined in the form of expectations of damage):

1. a. Active heavy and medium bomber home bases and primary staging bases [80% expectation of severe damage to the aircraft and above ground facilities.]

b. Soft ICBM sites [psi or less] [80% expectation of severe damage to missiles and launchers.]

c. Primary missile-launching submarine bases (or their access to the sea) [80% expectation of severe damage to base facilities (or 80% expectation of denial of access to the sea).]

d. Known and fixed soft MRCM/IREM sites [psi or less] within strike range of U.S. forces overseas or of forces of principal Allies of the U.S. - [70% expectation of severe damage to missiles and launchers.]

e. Active light bomber home bases [-70% expectation of severe damage to aircraft and above-ground facilities.]

f. Primary nuclear weapons and CBR storage and production facilities - [70% expectation of severe damage to structures.]

2. Urban industrial centers in which are located significant segments of the Sino-Soviet industrial and technological base and primary military and government controls, the destruction of which will most effectively reduce Sino-Soviet wartime and post-war capability and will to continue the war. Expectation of significant damage to [50% of the industrial floor space in 100 cities] selected according to industrial importance, in the USSR and China. DGZ selections will be accomplished in such a manner as to minimize damage to major military and government control centers, as well as any highly critical industrial plants.

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Inclosure 2 to Memo to Sec Def

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